Leicester, Massachusetts, Nov. 7.
1858.

Dear friend Webb -

I have suffered a good deal of self-reproach, for months past, that not you only, but all my English friends and correspondents were so neglected. Again and again has the time been appropriated, in advance, for writing; but alas, the name of action was lost. It may seem strange - it does seem so to myself sometimes - that I, who am writing letters so much of my whole time, cannot do off a letter to go across the water as readily and easily as I do others. But I cannot. For a letter, to go abroad, more time and attention to me seem to be demanded, and I have not for a good while past felt equal to a foreign letter. In the first place, my health has not been good since last winter. Every effort has been laborious to me, whether bodily or mental, and I have found myself unequal to engaging readily in work which has usually been a matter of course and comparatively easy. I did go, in August, with Garrison into Vermont for a fortnight where we kept up daily meetings, some of them highly encouraging, and which we enjoyed very much. The excitement kept me up at the time very well, and the journeying and fine mountain air of that beautiful State seemed to do me good. But my autumn has not been very satisfactory; and the daily-recurring work of the office, &c. has been as much as I felt up to. Last evening came your friendly note of the 9th October, - via New York - and the sight of it has stirred me (after inditing four other indispensable letters) to do, what I ought to have done long since, - viz^t. send you one word of affectionate greeting across the seas...

I was very glad to see another letter from you. I will not name the infrequency of your letters as a second reason for my own silence, for it was not. I have not "stood upon ceremony" with you, and shall not begin now. Indeed I need give no second reason for my writing so seldom — that of indifferent health, weighing upon the mind and spirits, is enough. And yet I can sympathetically respond to your remarks about the abandonment of the Bazaar, and I am sure that the breaking of this magnetic cable, between us and you, has had a great deal to do with the temporary cessation of letters, — I hope it will be only temporary. It is so true, as you say, that "people act so much from habit, that when they are put out, it is hard to get them into the same disposition for any effort again". This applies to us here, as well as to your side. I have seen this effect, while I have seen no immediate way to prevent it. — The annual Bazaar, with its various dependencies, was a way of helping the great cause, which commended itself to hundreds, not to say thousands. It called out the talent, & tact, of each one, and every one felt that he, or she, could work, and make his or her contribution to it, without interfering with another's, but rather adding thereto. It was employment for many an odd minute and hour, it appealed to each one's peculiar taste & disposition, it welcomed all help, and thus was a certain nucleus, and common bond, such as we all need, even when morally and spiritually united in the closest manner in behalf of a just and noble object. Thus I lament the striking down of the Bazaar, (and this is an almost universal feeling with our people) because it takes away a tangible & visible

bond of unity and fellowship, without putting anything whatever in its place. - But this effect I think cannot, and I devoutly hope will not, be permanent. Our cause is so vast, so immediately and constantly important to the moral progress of the nation, and (it may even be said) of the world, that its friends, wherever they may be, can never lack community of thought, of feeling, and of aspiration, nor a sufficient motive and spur to keep them together and urge them to action.

You will perceive then that you have sympathy, this side of the water, in "the low place" in which, using Friends' language, you say you have latterly been lying about Antislavery matters. I think this state of mind has been apparent with our best friends here. I hope it has had no other cause than the sudden disarrangement of our machinery, which has thrown us all, for the time being, into a position of comparative isolation, and kept us waiting to see "what is to be done next". For the last 5 or 6 weeks Mrs. Chapman has been a severe sufferer with a kind of rheumatic attack in her right shoulder & arm, which entirely disabled her, for a considerable time, from all use of the arm & hand. Of course she could write nothing: consequently the efforts she was so vigorously plying, to collect subscriptions for the 'Festival', came to a stand-still for the time being. And it seemed to me (entre nous) that this must be regarded as a providential intimation that it is as unsafe, as it clearly is unwise, for any one lady to attempt to do the whole work of 30 or 40; - one being disabled, everything stops. She is now however better, and her plans are gradually developing themselves. So far as I know them, a great Social Antislavery Gathering is to be had the latter part of January, just on the eve of our

State Society's annual meeting. A simple repast of tea, &c. is to open the affair, and spee is to follow. So far as I understand, it will resemble somewhat the tea-drinkings so common in England on charitable occasions, save that it will not be a sit-down affair. There are to be various aids to the entertainment & interest of the scene I believe, but precisely what I am not informed. And in some way, about which I am far from being clear, money is to be gathered in. Our male friends quite unanimously regret that has selected the time of the Annual Meeting, whe has a work of its own to do, and as much as its united strength at ~~that~~ the time is equal to, without the addition of more. This regret is known to C. C., but she thinks us mistaken. — It is much be hoped that the numerous and solid results of he policy may prove its wisdom beyond all gainsa — I am conscious now of another reason, which greatly indisposed me (I am sure) for Correspond across the water. I felt ~~that I would~~ that I might be led into tone of complaint (or something nearly approachin it the course taken by Mrs. C.; for I could not g into the subject of our future operations, and conceal my difference of judgment from hers i some important particulars; and it is not ne unpleasant, but every way undesirable, to dwe upon such differences of opinion & judgment, whi (after all) a few months may entirely remove.

But, I was saying, I hope your own dejec State (if I am not using too strong an expression) may wholly ascribable to the temporary derangement of ou machinery, & that it will soon entirely disappear

I do not share in your feeling that the "cause seems flat", amongst us here; or I should not, at least, so describe the state of things which you advert to. I own there is not, at present, that excitement, or stir, which has sometimes marked the cause and its progress. There are reasons for this, and such reasons as to comfort us, and encourage us greatly. The South is dismayed at last,- palpably so, and with great reason. It ventured every thing on a few desperate throws, - the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the Dred Scott decision especially,- and hoped by bold playing, and a defiant, cut-throat attitude, to carry its point. It selected a crafty, popular old Northern politician to lead its forces, and he promised them success, and the thorough routing and annihilation of their enemies. He undertook the task, and has been working vehemently and unscrupulously to accomplish it. He has been met, face to face, in every move he has made, in every position he has taken, and has been himself defeated & humbled in the most ignominious manner; and, what he feels most sorely of all, his own original friend, his own party, and his own State, have to a great extent deserted him. The Slaveholders were not prepared for this, and now stand aghast. They do not repent, neither do they own their shame and their guilt, but at present they are quiet. Their talk of seizing Cuba, and re-opening the African Slave Trade, is hushed for the present. The North is very generally of the opinion that, by the October and November elections, it has given the South a very powerful dose indeed, and it too is waiting to see the operation. That seems to me to be the present position of the parties, North & South; they are antagonist forces, and the loudest bragger for Union cannot

deny it, nor make anything else ~~of~~ of it.
They have long been preparing for a contest. The
North has now (to use the language of prize-
fighters, which I do abominate in that connexion,
especially as we have just had one of the most
brutal & disgusting fights of that sort which can
degrade and bestialize human nature, - still this
language seems to express very correctly the course
which North and South are pursuing towards each other)
- the North has now just struck the South one of the
heaviest blows the latter has ever received, or the
former ever roused itself to give. The South is
staggered - ~~It~~ it plainly reels under the effects.
The North is no wise damaged by said blow, but
seems wonderfully refreshed - all the better for it.
Now they stand - both rather quietly, ~~as rebels, to~~
~~each other~~ - each looking at the other, and considering
what the next step must be.

Meantime our agents, speakers, writers, & friends
are urging the fundamental truths of the contest
wherever they go, and have never been more diligently
at work, nor more successful than during the year
past. The radical truths we utter are becoming under-
stood by the people, - are appreciated now by the more
intelligent and conscientious, - and are having a
freer & freer course, and are yet to be glorified
in the sight of the whole nation & of the world. I
cannot stop to particularize, but will only say that
Garrison has just returned from a month's most
successful and triumphant tour into Pennsylvania,
Ohio, and New York, where he has spoken the word to the
greatest acceptation, compromising & concealing nothing,
refraining not to declare the whole counsel of God,

He attended two State Annual Meetings; that in Pennsylvania was quiet, as all those meetings are, composed of staid and quiet Friends in great part, but it was eminently strong, effective, and full of hope! The Ohio meeting was spirited & enthusiastic, and greatly raised the spirits of our earnest fellow-laborers there. — Then it is cheering to witness the results of the late elections. Throughout the North, there has been but one issue, viz: Buchanan's administration, shall it be justified and sustained? Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island and Connecticut and Ohio had already said No; as was to have been expected. Then came Pennsylvania, the President's own State, and it said No, to his utter consternation, and in an emphatic tone which equally surprised and delighted every honest man. Then Massachusetts spoke, and said No, of course, but with such an extraordinary unanimity & so great a shout as were really startling. Then New York, the most powerful & populous of all the States, said No! Then New Jersey, to the general surprise, said No! Then Illinois, alas! for the President's hopes in the West, even Illinois deserted him more completely than any other State had done, & divided its votes between Stephen A. Douglas (the man whom Buchanan dreads & hates beyond any other living being) and the Republican party — thus, with a near approach to entire unanimity, thundering a No, to the President and the South, which have certainly filled them with great alarm. So of other states, such as Michigan, Wisconsin, & Iowa — all have said No, with more or less of stern & indignant rebuke. [N.B. I hope I am not in danger of being applied to, to write political squibs for party newspapers, after such a paragraph as the above!] Now you will see, I think, that, if less excited than at some times, our friends & fellow-workers never had more cause for hope.

I cannot tell you much about R. C. Waterston & wife. They were to remain abroad, I was told, another year, and I suppose are travelling. There is ~~was~~ indeed a heavy affliction, a deep sorrow. You were the first to communicate to me the tidings of that death; and it reached me here, several days before it named in any public print. — Quincy's writing for the Standard, the Tribune, & (occasionally) the Atlantic Monthly, keep him pretty much occupied. Phillips is tied at home by his wife's increased illness; he scarcely lectures or appears in public, & will not for some time to come. — Whether I can get for you the answers to the inquiries you send, respecting the market prices of certain articles for 10 years, — I cannot say. I will see what I can do. — 'Tis not in my line, and our people are wretchedly poor statisticians, — but I may be able to get hold of something.

My worthy Cousin Samuel Joseph May is about visiting Europe. His health has become greatly impaired by a long course of unusually steady & unintermitting ministerial labours. He abjured all routine — always did, since he entered the ministry about the year 1822. He would always take a strong hold of every good cause, and work at the laboring oar. A remarkably cheerful disposition, and happy temper have carried him through an amount of toil which few ministers ever think of attempting. About 2 years ago he had a violent attack of erysipelas, from the effects of which he has never recovered. He has asked leave of absence, & goes abroad for a year or so. He will go first to France, and with a son (now in Paris) will spend the winter probably in Italy. In the spring he will be in G. Britain, & you must see him, & he must see you. — Some 4 to 6 weeks ago, I sent you a parcel, by ship, which you sh^d. have received before this. — I enclose a note from Higginson, which will tell you just what you ask to know about the Woman's Journal, I believe. — Will you send, per post, one of the enclosed little tracts, to Wm. Robson Esq? Warrington. Esq.

Truly & affec'ly, Your friend Saml. J. May. —